
Delivering Drinking Water in Idaho

Developing the Technical, Financial, and Managerial
Capacity of Public Water Systems



Report to the Governor of the State of Idaho
September 2005

Photo Cover: Alan Miller of the DEQ Coeur d'Alene regional office installs a solar panel for a new remote turbidity monitoring station on the Myrtle Creek intake for the City of Bonners Ferry. Photo by Suzanne Scheidt, DEQ Coeur d'Alene regional office.

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Introduction to Capacity Development

This Report: The Last Three Years

This report on the achievements of the Capacity Development Program is required every three years by the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) capacity development provisions.¹ The first of these reports was submitted in September 2002.

This report first provides an introduction to the Capacity Development program. It then highlights recent ways in which Idaho's public water systems are maintaining and improving their capacity for delivering safe, reliable water. After that, other organizations that are helping develop the capacity of Idaho's drinking water systems are introduced. Finally, we take a look toward the future of Idaho's Capacity Development Program.

Capacity Development is Different from most regulatory programs

Unlike most federal regulatory programs, capacity development is purposely flexible and amounts to "a new way of doing business." It is so different; it has been described as "a sea change."

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) Amendments of 1996 marked the first SDWA reauthorization to include a capacity development initiative. A "viability" concept was debated earlier, but more than just viability of existing systems was really wanted, as described here:

The debate was really about finding a way ... systems could enhance their technical, managerial, and financial capacity ... Thus the concept became known as "Capacity Development." Capacity development implies a process, not a static endpoint, and does not promote a focus on rigidly classifying systems as "having it" or "not having it."²

Capacity development consists of a flexible strategy, not rigid rules to be complied with. The EPA directed states to develop their own strategies, saying,

Capacity development provides flexibility to States ... EPA's contribution to capacity development programs consists of guidance and information documents, rather than regulation. EPA expects and encourages diversity in State programs. There are many acceptable approaches to meeting the minimal requirements outlined in the SDWA.³

In Idaho, the approach was to establish the Capacity Development Citizens Advisory Committee, thereby complying with the SDWA provision that states, "In preparing the capacity development strategy, the States shall ... solicit public comment ..."⁴ The committee solicited public comment on their findings and recommendations. The result of their work is the strategy that guides Idaho's

¹ Capacity development regulations require this report to be made to the Governor. This report must also be made available to the public. [P.L. 104-182, 1420(c)(3) Sec. 119].

² "Handbook for Capacity Development: Developing Water System Capacity Under the Safe Drinking Water Act as Amended in 1996." U.S. EPA. July 1999. <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/smallsys/regcoor.pdf>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ P.L. 104-182, 1420(c)(2).

Capacity Development Program. The strategy and the program's achievements are highlighted in this report.

Capacity Development Goal and Focus

The ultimate goal of the Capacity Development Program is to ensure that our current capacity to deliver safe, reliable water is not only maintained, but is expanded to meet our future needs.

The program focuses support on public water systems, as they strive to maintain and expand their technical, financial, and managerial capacity, recognizing that all three types of capacity are vital.

The Capacity Development Challenge

The intent of the Capacity Development initiative is to make delivery of safe, reliable water sustainable regardless of current and future challenges.

Toni Hardesty, Idaho's Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) Director says, "Sustainability is what many businesses are referring to as the triple bottom line. Those of us who make our home in the inland northwest value a healthy economy, environment, and vibrant communities. When we are successful in all of these areas we are achieving the triple bottom line."

Ms. Hardesty's recognition of this challenge – to maximize the triple bottom line – underscores what Lance Nielsen, Idaho's Drinking Water Program Manager, has said, "The health and economic vitality of Idaho's future – of its citizens and communities – depends on an adequate supply of safe, reliable water. Idaho's ability to deliver safe, reliable water depends on maintaining and developing the technical, financial, and managerial capacity of public water systems."

The Capacity Development Program's challenge is to help drinking water systems not only with solving immediate challenges, such as complying with new health-protective regulations and coping with aging equipment, but to go further and develop their capacity to deliver safe, reliable water now and into the future.

Establishing The Capacity Development Strategy

Idaho's capacity development strategy was initiated by the Capacity Development Citizens Advisory Committee. Their original findings and recommendations are contained in their *Report of Findings*.⁵ Based on these findings and recommendations, DEQ developed a long-term strategy for improving the technical, financial, and managerial capacity of Idaho's public drinking water systems.⁶ Among other considerations, the strategy requires that the state consider how to make best use of the state's authority and resources and that systems be prioritized according to their need for assistance.

⁵ Report of Findings: On Improving the Technical, Financial and Managerial Capacity of Idaho's Public Water Systems, Citizens Advisory Committee to the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, incorporated in A Strategy for Improving the Financial, Technical and Managerial Capacity of Idaho's Public Drinking Water Systems, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, Boise, Idaho, July, 2000.

⁶ A Strategy for Improving the Financial, Technical and Managerial Capacity of Idaho's Public Drinking Water Systems, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, Boise, Idaho, July, 2000.

Making Best Use of the State's Authority and Resources

The SDWA calls for the state to apply its authorities in these three general areas:

1. Assisting systems in complying with the national primary drinking water regulations.
2. Assisting public water systems in the training and certification of operators.
3. Encouraging the development of partnerships between public water systems.

Each of these areas is highlighted below. In addition, a special highlight describes Idaho's first Area Wide Optimization Program (AWOP). This AWOP allows Idaho to apply its authorities in all three areas.

Assisting Systems in Complying With National Primary Drinking Water Regulations

We have many ways of providing compliance assistance. Two are described below: distributing information about regulations in Drinking Water Newsletters, and providing specialized assistance for systems affected by the new Arsenic Rule. In addition, a specially highlighted surface water protection effort (see page 4) is helping a drinking water system in a remote location comply with the Long Term 1 Surface Water Treatment Rule.

Distributing Information on Regulations in Drinking Water Newsletters

One of our primary methods of communications, the Drinking Water Newsletter, has become a familiar source of information for operators and managers of drinking water systems. Drinking Water Newsletters are usually issued four times a year, with additional special issues as needed. They are mailed to all public water systems, and are also online at http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water/assist_business/pws/newsletters.cfm.

While the newsletter serves many purposes, one of the foremost is providing advance notification of new regulations, often years before the regulations take effect. This advance notice is important for systems that may need to determine whether they already meet the proposed standards, identify and evaluate their options if they aren't meeting the standard, raise funds to pay for any necessary changes, and get necessary changes in place and operating correctly. Necessary changes may range from buying and installing expensive treatment equipment to hiring an expert consultant or manager. Examples of such advance notice are:

- ☐ The Arsenic Rule – notice of the new Arsenic rule was provided in an early 2002 newsletter issue. The rule had already been adopted but meeting the new standard of 10 parts per billion (ppb) is not required until 2006. Because many systems had never sampled to see how much arsenic they might have, and treatment for excessive arsenic is very expensive, systems needed information in plenty of time to be ready to comply in 2006. More information and offers of assistance were included in six newsletters during the next three years.
- ☐ The Radionuclides Rule – this rule, which began its phase-in of new provisions in December 2003, was discussed in an early 2002 issue of the newsletter.

- ❑ Two upcoming regulations – the following information was included in a 2003 newsletter:

... the Stage 1 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule (DBP Rule) and the Interim Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule (IESWTR). These two rules are part of a group of existing and upcoming regulations that deal with the control of microbial contaminants and the chemical byproducts that sometimes result from the use of disinfectants.

This provided advance notice of regulations that would mostly take effect in 2004 and 2005, including the Long Term 1 Surface Water Treatment Rule (LT1), which was due to replace the IESWTR. The LT1 is discussed again in two successive 2004 issues of the newsletter

- ❑ The total coliform rule – in 2003, readers were advised that EPA was considering making changes in this rule that relates to bacteria in drinking water. It referred them to an EPA website where they could get updates about EPA's considerations and actions. In June 2005, a three-part newsletter series on coliform sampling began.

Specialized Assistance for Complying With the New Arsenic Rule

In the fall of 2002, selected public water systems in Idaho had the opportunity to have their water tested for arsenic at DEQ's expense. This was a one-time opportunity, made available to all the state's non-community non-transient systems. The testing was done in preparation for complying with the arsenic rule in 2006, when the new, more stringent, maximum contaminant level of 10 ppb will be in effect.

The targeted systems were invited to send in a water sample for arsenic testing. DEQ would then tell the system what their arsenic level was, and if necessary, how they could prepare to meet the new arsenic standard in 2006.

This opportunity was announced in a Drinking Water Newsletter. Later newsletters provided information about how to comply, when and where related training was available, and how to file for a time extension.

Water system participation was strong, and results were good news:

- ❑ From approximately 247 eligible systems, 110 were sampled. Only six of those samples contained arsenic levels greater than 10 ppb.
- ❑ These six systems can start planning to meet this challenge, while the systems whose arsenic levels are well below 10 ppb can concentrate on other concerns.

One Special Case of Improving Compliance

In one case, a drinking water system with a remotely located surface water supply faced extra challenges in meeting drinking water standards after a forest fire. The challenges and the way they solved them is detailed on the following two pages.

Protecting Drinking Water: The New Myrtle Creek Remote Turbidity Monitoring Station Bonners Ferry, Idaho

In September 2003 a wildfire consumed approximately 3600 acres of the Myrtle Creek watershed. Myrtle Creek has provided drinking water to the City of Bonners Ferry since 1928. Once the fire was contained, concerns turned to the potential for damage to the drinking water intake and the 6 miles of pipeline which transfer the water to the city water treatment plant where it is treated so that it is safe for human consumption. Damage would likely come from sedimentation loads which could result from snow melt or rain events in a watershed now unprotected by natural vegetation.

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Coeur d'Alene regional office investigated the installation of remote turbidity monitoring and alarming equipment which could be installed at the intake. They designed a project with equipment that could be read remotely and would provide alarm capability in the event of high turbidity. This would allow the plant to be shut down preventing sedimentation deposits in the 6 mile pipeline and potential damage to the water treatment plant.

A remote turbidity monitoring station was successfully installed at the Myrtle Creek intake in January 2004. The equipment was purchased and installed through a contract with Electronic Data Solutions (EDS) in Jerome, Idaho. Rusty Munn, surface water manager at EDS provided a wealth of technical support throughout the implementation of this project. Representatives from the City of Bonners Ferry and drinking water staff from the DEQ Coeur d'Alene regional office assisted with the installation.



Myrtle Creek intake; the turbidity sensor is housed in a gray PVC conduit mounted to the catwalk.



Myrtle Creek and the intake structure used to divert the creek for a drinking water source. January 2004.

The monitoring station is comprised of a sensor to measure turbidity levels and water temperature at the water intake, and a communications system tied into the operating system at the water intake. Because a local repeater system was already available for use, the City of Bonners Ferry only pays twenty dollars per month for this service.

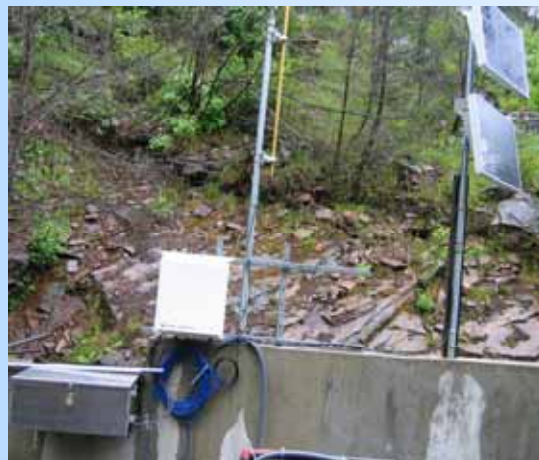
The data logger is programmed to trigger an alarm when turbidity levels exceed a preset point. The alarm starts a series of automated communications that ends with the automated closure of the Myrtle Creek valve in about two minutes.

The turbidity standard at the intake has been exceeded several times since the equipment was installed. The event of greatest magnitude occurred shortly after a storm dropped 1.5 inches of rain in the watershed within 20 minutes. This event, which occurred on July 4, 2004, produced a turbidity high of 2100 NTU. Normal turbidities from the creek are approximately 1.5 NTU and drinking water standards require less than 0.5 NTU. Had the equipment not been installed, considerable damage would have occurred to the city's water treatment plant, and Bonners Ferry citizens would have been without safe and reliable drinking water.

Use of the monitoring equipment as the watershed recovers from the wildfire has contributed significantly to the City of Bonners Ferry's ability to successfully protect the 6 miles of transmission line between the intake and the treatment plant from failure due to excessive sediment. Most importantly, this monitoring capability will enable the city to provide drinking water that continues to meet safe drinking water standards during the transitional period of rehabilitation and stabilization of the Myrtle Creek watershed.



Myrtle Creek intake. May 2005.



Battery box, data logger, antenna and solar panels (left to right).

Assisting public water systems in the training and certification of operators.

Ensuring that public water systems have the information and opportunities they need to have properly licensed operators is another important focus of the Capacity Development Program.

Operator Certification

The Idaho 2020 Blue Ribbon Task Force recommended consolidating state government functions as much as possible. In accordance, operator certification was transferred from DEQ to the Idaho Bureau of Occupational Licenses (IBOL), a State of Idaho entity already responsible for licensing practitioners in almost two dozen different occupations. For drinking water operators, the IBOL provides licensing services under contract with the Idaho State Board of Drinking Water and Wastewater Professionals (WWP Board).

Operator certification (now called operator licensing in Idaho) continued without interruption during this transition. Now that the transition is complete, DEQ resources have been freed up and can be used to pursue other Capacity Development opportunities. As always, DEQ maintains authority for requiring the public water systems to have properly licensed operators. While the IBOL administers the licensing of individual operators, DEQ regulates the systems where operators work to provide safe, reliable drinking water. When necessary to protect public health, DEQ will pursue enforcement against systems that do not have properly licensed operators.

Operator Training

DEQ continues to provide the following types of training support for operators seeking licensing:

- ☐ A contract with Brown Environmental, Inc. to provide training on drinking water topics.
- ☐ The certification and training website, now hosted by DEQ: <http://www.idahocertificationtraining.com/index.htm>. On this website, one feature that had been requested often by users is the comprehensive training calendar, now available at http://www.idahocertificationtraining.com/training_calendar.htm. Other features include information and forms needed to apply for a license, and licensing rules for individual operators and systems.
- ☐ An operator expense reimbursement program that defrays the expenses required to gain proper licensing. This program benefits operators of small systems, who are often volunteers and are therefore unusually burdened by these costs.

Encouraging the development of partnerships between public water systems.

Idaho's first AWOP is highlighted on the following pages. This program is encouraging the development of partnerships among the participating public water systems.

The AWOP also is assisting the systems in complying with new regulations (especially the Long Term 1 Surface Water Treatment Rule), with training their operators, and with the second strategy element highlighted in this report: prioritizing needs.

Area Wide Optimization Program

An Area Wide Optimization Program (AWOP) "... is a strategy for targeting groups of higher risk systems for state assistance to maximize the public health protection that water treatment plants provide."⁷ These optimization programs have been considered an excellent strategy for many states' Capacity Development programs. The EPA provides guidance on how Capacity Development programs can implement AWOPs. In general, an AWOP provides these benefits⁸:



Steve Tanner, DEQ Coeur d'Alene office

- ☐ Water systems operators better understand their roles in treatment optimization and public health protection;
- ☐ A water system operator's ability to apply new technical concepts is enhanced, and results in sustained improvements in plant operation;
- ☐ Water system operators receive the tools needed to comply with drinking water rules;
- ☐ The useful life of existing infrastructure is prolonged;
- ☐ States effectively and efficiently use limited resources.

⁷ "Implementing AWOPs through the Capacity Development and DWSRF Programs," U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/smallsys/pdfs/awop-capdev-dwsrf.pdf>, viewed September 2, 2005.

⁸ Ibid.

Prioritizing Needs

One of the first elements when implementing an AWOP is prioritizing systems' needs for help. In Idaho, drinking water systems using surface water as a source and coagulation as a treatment face extra challenges, making their needs high priority. Idaho's first AWOP has been established to assist them.

Targeted Performance Improvement

The second major component of an AWOP is targeted performance improvement, meaning the needs for improved performance at these particular plants are addressed directly. Using existing tools – in this case sanitary surveys and optimization software – we determine the factors limiting these systems' performance and the changes needed to optimize performance, then give operators training and tools for making the performance improvements. In the current AWOP, this includes comprehensive performance evaluations (CPEs), performance based training (PBT), and comprehensive technical assistance (CTA), each of which is discussed in detail below.

Comprehensive Performance Evaluations

In March 2004, EPA Region 10 invited four DEQ staff members to participate in a comprehensive performance evaluation. Because a comprehensive performance evaluation consists of a thorough review and analysis of a facility's design capabilities along with review and analysis of their administrative, operational, and maintenance practices related to achieving optimum performance, it is an intensive learning experience for all participants as well as for the water system operator of the system being evaluated. In November 2004, one DEQ staff member from the DEQ Boise regional office attended an additional comprehensive performance evaluation in Petersburg, Alaska, hosted by Alaska Technical Training Center. The expertise gained in these comprehensive performance evaluations is being utilized by DEQ staff in the form of technical assistance to individual plants and assisting with facilitation of performance based training in Idaho's AWOP program.

Performance Based Training

Trainers, facilitators, water plant operators, and water plant administrators are brought together in performance based training. After an initial session for facilitators only, there are five additional sessions planned during the next year. Water plant administrators were strongly encouraged to attend the first session, to solidify internal commitment to the program.

The training is progressive, with each new session building on the previous one. The sessions include both classroom and in-plant training and are supported by operator homework assignments and periodic phone facilitation.



Doug Ladely, Gwen Wise, Rod Millbrook, Bob Hansen at an AWOP Performance Based Training in Lewiston

Session 3, for instance, began with operators making presentations about special studies they had designed and conducted in their own plants.

Comprehensive Technical Assistance

Comprehensive technical assistance is integral to AWOP activities. However, a unique need was identified and fulfilled in the course of this AWOP. Plant operators were learning to use optimization software and finding it a critical tool for the needed performance improvements, but found their computers unable to run the software. Idaho's DEQ donated surplus computers to several plants where operators are now able to use the optimization software. More surplus computer donations are planned during the next few weeks, and likely well into the future.

Technical assistance has also been given in the form of interpreting new drinking water regulations or providing assistance on calibration of pumps, turbidimeters, and chlorine analyzers. For instance, Idaho's AWOP personnel have taken a role in helping systems comply with the new Long Term 1 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule (LT1SWTR) that came into effect in January 2005. Oftentimes, mere discussion of a new concept can be the impetus for plant improvements that protect public health, another benefit of these relationships and networks that are being formed through AWOP.

Successful Results

Turbidity levels of treated or "finished" water are one of the best measures of the quality of the water delivered to consumers. The greater percentage of time a utility produces lower turbidity water the greater the protection of public health. Some measures of success include:

- ☐ For 90% of the people receiving treated surface water from these coagulation plants, the turbidity of that water was lower after a year of implementing this AWOP.
- ☐ At individual facilities the following improvements were made: the City of Priest River improved the amount of time they met or exceeded the turbidity optimization goal from 3.8% to 98.4% of the time; United Water's increase in time spent meeting the goal was smaller – from 89.8% to 97.4% of the time – but this increase is impressive considering United Water in Boise serves 90,000 people from its coagulation plant.

The Future of AWOP in Idaho

The primary goal of the first AWOP is to continually assess and document the finished water of Idaho's coagulation plants. If declines are seen in water quality, the AWOP goal is to recognize that decline and attempt to provide assistance and tools to the water system operators to mitigate the situation. With training and tools, and strong relationships among the operators and between the operators and DEQ, we expect these plants to be successful in meeting future challenges to optimization – even challenges that are not anticipated now. This will serve to maintain and improve public health protection for Idaho citizens.

This AWOP for plants using coagulation treatment has been so successful; there are plans to add an AWOP for plants that use slow sand filtration.

Identifying and Prioritizing Systems That Most Need Assistance

One strategy element that underlies all the rest is identifying and prioritizing systems that need technical. To pursue this strategy, we need useful and timely information about the 2,031 public water systems in the state. Therefore, we have continued our underlying quest for better and more accessible information about the systems. To achieve this, DEQ redesigned the enhanced sanitary survey – the questions we ask when we inspect drinking water systems – in several ways.

The enhanced sanitary survey is now streamlined for more efficient use. Streamlining it allows us to better protect public health by completing more surveys each year.

Idaho's enhanced sanitary survey is consistent statewide. In six different DEQ regions and seven different District Health regions, surveys conducted by more than two dozen different people are now highly consistent. This means the information in them can be used more easily, without having to make adjustments for differences in what questions are asked or how the answers are recorded.

Each completed survey is also electronically captured. Having the results collected and maintained electronically in one central location gives us better access to the information in the completed surveys. Trends can be identified and focused training can be provided for deficiencies.

The enhanced sanitary survey continues to be the keystone of Idaho's Capacity Development Program. Because these surveys bring us face to face with all the drinking water systems operators, we believe this is the best source of information about the systems and the best opportunity for communicating with the operators. The following page has highlights of recent improvements in the enhanced sanitary survey.

Enhanced Sanitary Surveys: The Key to the Future

Continuing The Initial Effort

Our initial redesign of the sanitary survey made it comprehensive. During the last three years, further refinement has made it more consistent statewide and streamlined.

Comprehensive Inspector Training

A week of training in March 2005 gave inspectors opportunities to:

- ☐ learn about all sections of the survey;
- ☐ receive intensive training on newer topics such as cross-connection control and backflow prevention;
- ☐ discuss how they gather and report sanitary survey information to ensure statewide consistency in protecting public health.



Steve Stauffer, DEQ Boise Office

More than 50 inspectors from Idaho DEQ, Idaho District Health Departments, and the U.S. Forest Service attended this training. Presentations were made by DEQ staff, Idaho Attorney General staff, Brown Environmental, Cadmus, and United Water.

Information Capture

The EPA's Drinking Water Academy in Washington, D.C. recognized Idaho's pioneering work in using personal digital assistants (PDAs) to develop an electronic version of the sanitary survey when they wrote, "... the Drinking Water Academy has been building on work pioneered by the State of Idaho's Drinking Water Program." Capturing information digitally in the field reduces or eliminates time spent and errors made in data capture. We are now evaluating newer devices that can be even more useful in the field.

Toward the Future

Idaho's DEQ is focusing on efficiently integrating the information captured into our primary database for drinking information.



water

Integrating Captured Information With Our Drinking Water Database

We expect to use the Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS) for this purpose. We are currently using a state version of SDWIS both to store drinking water information and to facilitate our required reporting to the EPA, which is compatible with the SDWIS national database. EPA is developing SDWIS-To-Go, to allow "transporting" of some SDWIS functions into the field laptop computers. With improved electronic devices and the new SDWIS-To-Go software, we expect to streamline the process of getting information gathered during sanitary surveys into our SDWIS database and to further improve our ability to efficiently use that information.

Using Captured Information

As we evaluate new devices for field use, we are also anticipating the release of software that will allow efficient integration of electronically gathered information with our drinking water database. Ultimately, all sanitary survey responses should be in this database, and we should be able to query the database to discover which systems are most in need of assistance, what type of assistance they need, and which of those needs are highest priority.

Other Organizations That Support Capacity Development

The organizations introduced below have been instrumental in various efforts to maintain and improve Idaho's capacity to provide safe, reliable drinking water.

Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University

The Environmental Finance Center (EFC) for EPA's Region 10 is headquartered at Boise State University. The EFC's primary aim is to improve the financial and managerial capabilities of environmental systems and utilities.

The EFC provides third-party review of the technical, financial, and managerial capacity of drinking water systems applying for funding from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, which is administered by DEQ. Such capacity reviews are required by the SDWA. Many systems have benefited from these loans in the last three years, with corresponding improvement in public health protection.

The EFC also provides training and one-on-one assistance to water systems. One topic is how to set rates (fees billed to customers) so that revenues will sustain the system over the long term instead of just covering each month's immediate expenses. This and other planning topics are included in the assistance given by the EFC.

Rural Community Assistance Corporation

The Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to assisting rural communities with achieving their goals and visions by providing them with training, technical assistance, and access to resources. Most RCAC services are available to communities with populations fewer than 50,000. DEQ continues to work with the RCAC to deliver assistance to Idaho's public water systems.

Idaho Rural Water Association

The Idaho Rural Water Association (IRWA) mission is "to provide a network of technical assistance in an effort to improve viability of the rural water and wastewater systems in Idaho."

DEQ continues to work with the IRWA to provide assistance to these remote systems. In particular, the IRWA has Circuit Riders who provide assistance to systems in remote rural areas. They also provide workshops on timely topics, often in cooperation with other organizations.

Evaluating Capacity Development Efforts

For the Capacity Development Program, “The place where ‘the rubber meets the road’ is where someone turns on the kitchen faucet or the school drinking fountain,” says Lance Nielsen, Idaho’s Drinking Water Program Manager.

Idaho’s Capacity Development Program efforts have included providing information on regulations and assistance in complying with them, assisting with a special challenge for a surface water system, establishing an optimization program for water systems with unique and increasing challenges, and ensuring a smooth transition from certification to licensing for operators, and improving the enhanced sanitary survey. These and other activities provide direct benefits to drinking water systems, and helped to ensure safe, reliable drinking water throughout Idaho – to ensure when the tap is turned on in a kitchen or a school hallway, that safe, reliable water is there.

Needs for the Future of Capacity Development

- ☐ Continued improvement in the ability to assess and prioritize the needs of drinking water systems for technical assistance from DEQ or other service providers.
- ☐ A streamlined method for matching peer systems that can provide each other mutual assistance.
- ☐ Better means to match public water systems with appropriate funding sources.
- ☐ Better means for “cutting red tape” to acquire infrastructure funding from loans and/or grants.
- ☐ Better means for “cutting red tape” that gets in the way of consolidating public water systems.
- ☐ Improved partnerships with other service providers, ensuring proper expertise when delivering assistance to small public water systems.
- ☐ Continuing communication about how big the scope of capacity development tasks really are.

Availability of This Report

This report is primarily published on the DEQ website, at http://www.deq.idaho.gov/water/data_reports/drinking_water/capacity_development.pdf. Publication of this report will be publicized with a news release and letters to interested parties.

In addition, a few printed copies have been supplied to Governor Dirk Kempthorne and his office; each of the state, regional, and local offices of the Department of Environmental Quality and the District Health Departments; and other organizations introduced here. We will also ask the entities named in this report to do us the honor of providing a link from their websites to this report.

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Costs associated with this publication are available from the Department of Environmental Quality in accordance with Section 60-202, Idaho Code.